

### It's National Nutrition Month!!!!

To celebrate nutrition, we are doing a special full page Nutrition Nuggets segment on a really hot topic, low-carb diets. These diets include, most notably, the Atkins Diet, South Beach Diet, and Zone Diet to name a few. The Atkins diet is the most restrictive on carbs, limiting to 20 grams a day initially and up to 60-90 grams a day in maintenance phases, then followed by the South Beach Diet, which does not actually count grams of carbs but restricts certain high carb foods, and Zone Diet, which allows up to 40% of total daily calories from carbs.

What is a "carb"? A "carb", or carbohydrate, is a food made up of small molecules of sugar. So, it is basically a group of sugars that form a molecule called a carbohydrate. Our bodies are designed to run off of carbohydrates. They are the preferred source of fuel and our bodies run most efficiently when they are using carbs for their fuel. They are the only source of fuel for our brains, which is why you might have trouble concentrating in class when you are really hungry.

Why are people trying to restrict them when they are dieting? Well, simply for that reason that most of us like to eat them so much that we eat too many of them. When we eat too much of any type of food, we get too many calories (remember the segment about metabolism in January) and that causes us to gain weight. So, it is not the carb that is the problem, it is the fact that we are overeating.

So, if we are overeating on carbs, why is a low-carb diet a problem? The problem is that low-carb diets restrict them too much. They get rid of the excess, but they do not allow the body what it needs to be healthy. Our bodies need to have at least fifty percent of our calories from carbohydrates, but low-carb diets, like the Atkins Diet, may only have 5-10% of the calories from carbs. They force the body to run off of fats for energy, which is not what the body was designed to do. When fat is used as a sole source of energy, it is not completely broken down by the body and will leave byproduct called a ketone in the blood stream. Since the body is using so many fats for fuel, it will leave abnormally high levels of ketones in the blood stream due to increased incomplete metabolism. These high levels of ketones may cause nausea and decreased appetite, which would make dieting easier. However, they also cause an increase in risk for kidney disease and gout. They will likely also cause dehydration, diarrhea, weakness, headaches, dizziness, and bad breath. If followed for an extended period of time they may also increase the risk for atherosclerosis, due to the high fat content of the diet, and osteoporosis.

The bottom line is that the only real way to lose weight is to simply cut back on the total number of calories you eat. Some good ways to do this are to get rid of extra fats in the diet as well as extra sugars such as soda, candy, sweets, and junk food. You also want to avoid overeating (remember the issue on portions sizes). And finally, the best way to help with weight loss is to exercise so that your body can burn off any excess calories you might accidentally get.

## Allergies: The Spring

If you have allergies you may be looking forward to spring with mixed emotions. Although it is warmer making it more pleasant to be outside, the trees and flowers begin to bloom resulting in ALLERGIES! Allergies are the result of an overreaction of the immune system to substances that generally cause no reaction to most other people. Although allergies are a bother, they can be controlled. Hay fever (rhinitis) is the most common form of allergies. If you think you might be suffering from allergies, ask these questions.

What can you do to make your spring bearable? Avoid your trigger allergens, like pollen. That may mean staying inside more during high pollen seasons. Symptom control. Use over the counter or prescribed medications to reduce or eliminate your symptoms. Remember, summer is not too far away!



Luck is when opportunity knocks and you answer.

Anonymous

When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."

Helen Keller

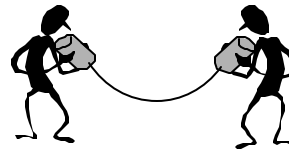
## Smokeless Doesn't Mean Harmless!

Spit tobacco is known as smokeless or chewing tobacco because it is held in the mouth or chewed rather than being burned and smoked like cigarettes, cigars or pipes. Some people think spit tobacco, which is also known as chew, snuff, dip or plug, is safer than smoking. The truth is both cigarettes and spit tobacco hurt your health.

Spit tobacco has 28 known cancer-causing chemicals and it also contains nicotine, which is the same addictive drug found in cigarettes. Because you hold spit tobacco in your mouth for minutes at a time, it can deliver two to three times the amount of nicotine as one cigarette. In fact, using two cans of spit tobacco a week has the same amount of nicotine as smoking 30 cigarettes a day or 1-1/2 packs per day. Spit tobacco ruins your sense of smell, makes your breath smell horrible, makes your teeth yellow, and causes your gums to recede and bleed. Teens have gotten cancer of the mouth, gums, throat, esophagus, and stomach within three years of using spit tobacco.

In order to treat oral cancer, parts of the tongue, jaw or mouth may need to be removed. As you can see, smokeless tobacco isn't harmless. If you chew, you may end up sick, disfigured or even dead!

## Communication: How Do I Let Them Know?



Have you noticed that your relationship with your parents or other adults in your life is changing? This is normal! As your body is growing your mind is growing too! These changes you are going through will make you into that unique individual you were meant to be.

You may find yourself disagreeing or rebelling against your parents or other adults. However, you need to keep the lines of communication open. Keep talking! That doesn't mean you have to tell them everything, but talk to them. Ask them about their day.

If you are tired of endless questions, share some information on your own. Keep adults informed of everyday things, you may be surprised the fewer questions they ask.

Use respectful language when disagreeing and try to resist the temptation to yell or be sarcastic. Don't make your disagreements personal.

If you need to discuss difficult issues, plan what you will say ahead of time, let the adults know there is something you would like to discuss, and select a good time to talk.